

**Woodham Mortimer and Hazeleigh Parish Council**  
**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**MINUTES – TUESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2022**

Convened at Woodham Mortimer & Hazeleigh Village Hall at 7:30pm

**In attendance:** Parish Councillors: Simon Brady (SB presiding), Kim McDonald (KM), Pauline McDonald (PM), Richard Britton (RB), Graham Harle (GH). County Cllr Jane Fleming (JF). Andrew Ritchings (AR) – Clerk to the Council recording proceedings.

**130.22 APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE**

Cllr Stephen Pemberton sent apologies as he is on holiday. Andrew Macmorland was not able to attend due to illness.

**131.22 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None declared.

**132.22 PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no members of public in attendance. Congratulations were noted to GH for winning a Maldon District Council Building Conservation award for work undertaken at Hazeleigh Hall.

**133.22 PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Minutes of Ordinary Council Meeting 08 November 2022 were agreed as a true representation of matters discussed as proposed by GH and seconded by RB.

**134.22 PLANNING**

**21/01276/FUL - LAND OPPOSITE ST MARGARET'S CHURCH MALDON ROAD WOODHAM MORTIMER** - *Erection of a crematorium with ceremony hall, memorial arboretum and associated use of land, restoration of Coopers Monument, vehicular access, parking, landscaping, pedestrian crossing and diversion of footpath (PROW 269\_17).* **AWAITING DECISION FROM LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY**

**21/00138 – LAND ADJACENT THE WILLOWS BRYANTS LANE WOODHAM MORTIMER –** *Proposed No. 1 dwelling with carport.* APPEAL No. APP/X1545/W/21/3283976. **AWAITING DECISION FROM PLANNING INSPECTORATE**

**22/00158 – BARN AT HATCH HOUSE FARM BURNHAM ROAD HAZELEIGH** *Conversion of an agricultural storage building into two dwelling houses (Class C3.)* Application status is noted on Maldon Planning portal as FDO but no other details are available.

**22/00942 – LITTLE GRANGE FARM MARLPITS ROAD WOODHAM MORTIMER –** *Erection of a new car port.* (Determination date 18/11/2022). **APPROVED**

**22/00443 – LAND REAR OF HILL BARN RECTORY LANE WOODHAM MORTIMER –** *Proposed conversion of existing equestrian/storage buildings to form 1No. new dwelling and associated development* APPEAL NO. APP/X1545/W/22/3303806. **AWAITING DECISION FROM PLANNING INSPECTORATE**

**22/00530 – KINVARA MANOR LODGE ROAD HAZELEIGH** - *Proposed new residential access to replace existing access onto Lodge Road.* (REFUSED BY LPA 13/07/2022). The Council has received reports that work has commenced although the application was refused. AR to make further enquiries.

### 135.22 SOLAR FARM COMMUNITY BENEFIT PAYMENTS

As not all Cllrs were present it was felt a full council should discuss and decide how to receive the Community Benefit Payments. Cllrs will consider how funds could be utilised for Village benefit and will advise options at the January meeting when all Cllrs are present.

### 136.22 COUNTY/DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Report from JF circulated to all cllrs included the following topics: Holiday Free School Meal Voucher Scheme Returns; ECC Cost of Living Support; Property Flood Resilience Grant; Free Christmas Parking in Maldon; The 2021 Census; £3M of Funding for Creative Businesses; Get Vocal on Local Issues; Fully-Funded Opportunities for Female Entrepreneurs; Young People are Encouraged to Sign up to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award; Find Send Support for Your Child; Travel for Free on the Park and Ride; Vaping Among Children and Young People.

### 137.22 HIGHWAY MATTERS

**A414 Pedestrian Crossing** – *measures to aid crossing the hazardous A414 Maldon Road. Scheduled for early 2023 feasibility study.* Nothing to report.

**Lodge Road – (adjacent to Old Mill House)** (*enquiry Nos. 2525149 logged 15/07/2017) and 2705814 logged 01/03/2021) rotten verge reflector post.* Nothing to report.

**Footway Defect A414** – *Foliage/soil restricting width of footway/pavement between Runsell Green Danbury and Woodham Mortimer Church. (First logged by Essex Highways at site meeting with SB 14/09/2018. Logged again by AR as a defect on 06/12/2022 Ref: 2808413).* Following latest reported log by AR Essex Highways have advised they are already aware of the issue and the Council will receive further updates as the issue is assessed. JF to make enquiries when the previous report was logged along with the relevant reference No.

**Lodge Road (junction with A414 Maldon Road)** – *earth deposits on verge (ref No. 2710764 logged 29/03/2021).* Nothing to report.

### 138.22 BUS SHELTERS/STOP SIGNS

GH confirmed the reported obstructed bus stop signs at the end of Lodge Road are ok and it was the signs at the end of Post Office Road which need attention. AR to advise JF the bus shelter and bus stops sign locations so she can seek clearance assistance.

### 139.22 FINANCIAL

**139.22.1 Balance of Accounts** – AR advised T1 Current Account balance of £831.47, Instant Access Savings Account £4,160.86, Total funds on account = £4,992.33.

**139.22.2 Budget proposals and precept demand for year 2023/24** - Cllrs considered budget forecasts for the financial year April 2023 to March 2024 which is expected to be a challenging year as the cost of living crisis continues with inflation forecast to increase before a period of stabilisation is expected, unknown future energy costs are also proving difficult for Cllrs to estimate street lighting costs. 2023 is a Parish Council election year so consideration should be given to any potential contested election costs. In consideration to the May Internal Auditor report advising Cllrs general reserves should be reviewed as they are below best practise guidelines, the Essex Association of Local Councils were contacted who provided best practise guidance from the National Association of Local Councils; advising the Council should hold 3-6 months expenditure as a general reserve. Given all the aforementioned matters and additional consideration to the Clerk's remuneration review and how difficult times are going to be for some parishioners Cllrs resolved to set the precept demand at £6,637 an approximate increase of 8.2% resulting in a Band D precept per property of £20.79.

### 139.22.3 Authorisation of payments:

Remembrance Day poppy wreath	£20.00
Clerk salary (Nett)	£633.60
HMR&C PAYE	£158.40
Clerk work from home allowance (11 weeks @ £4)	£44.00
Transfer from Savings Account to Current Account	£500.00

The balance of accounts, Precept Demand deliberations and resulting sum along with the authorisation of payments shown above were approved by all Cllrs present as proposed by KM and seconded by GH.

### 140.22 CLERKS EMPLOYMENT AND SALARY REVIEW

The latest NALC 2022-23 National Salary Award documents had been circulated to Cllrs and as proposed by KM, seconded by RB and agreed by all Cllrs present the Clerks salary remained on Spinal Column 14 at the new rate of £13.21 per hour.

### 141.22 INFORMATION ONLY

The Council have received reports from parishioners that the footpath off of Lodge Road Hazeleigh running behind the cemetery has been moved over to one side by the introduction of fencing limiting the path width. The Council understands that public rights exist across the whole green area between the two boundaries and will seek clarification from Essex County Council.

The Council have been contacted by a security company offering to give a 5 minute presentation that may help combat fly tipping, anti-social behaviour, travellers and burglaries, which was declined.

PM and KM advised the Village Hall Committee were glad to be re-introducing the popular Burns Night celebration at the Village Hall on 21/01/2023 but they would be limiting numbers.

Date of next scheduled ordinary meeting is 10/01/2023.

..... *Simon Brady*..... (Chairman to the Council) 10/01/2023